

ABSTRACT

A system for electronic distribution of books and other media. The system includes a number of self-service stations from which a customer can select and order items and download the ordered item to a portable reader or smart card. The system may include cryptoprocessing capabilities in order to prevent illicit duplication and distribution of items. The self-service stations are connected to a network of servers which provide access to information and capabilities, such as access to available titles which may be stored in a remote location, the ability to provide audio and video conferencing for customer assistance or as a special feature, such as a conference with an author, or access to customer account information. The system may collect and store customer information in order to provide the customer with an enhanced shopping experience, for example by collecting and analyzing purchase information in order to identify customer areas of interest and suggest purchases likely to interest the customer.